

[Translation]

Inclusion of Jains in Minority Community

*239. SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Minority Commission has recommended the Jain community to be declared as the minority community;

(b) if so, the basis thereof; and

(c) whether the Commission is empowered to declare any community as the minority?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The basis on which the National Commission for Minorities has recommended inclusion of Jains in minority community are :

- (i) the tenets of Jain religion, its philosophy and ethic, its objects and manner of worship are entirely different from those of the Hindus;
- (ii) the fact that Jainism differs from Hinduism in its religious practice;
- (iii) The constitutional provision under Explanation (II) to Article 25(2) (b) places Jain religion alongwith Sikh and Buddhist religions for the purpose of the Article 25(2) (b);
- (iv) Decisions of various High Courts holding that Jainism is a distinct religion different from Hinduism;
- (v) Population of the Jains is considerable as compared to those of Buddhists or Parsis as per 1971 and 1981 census figures.

(c) No, Sir.

[English]

Use of Land by Agriculturists

*240. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether an agitation is going to in the areas surrounding Taj Mahal in regard to the use of lands by agriculturists;

(b) whether the State Government authorities have failed to offer alternative lands to the existing agriculturists and rather renewed the lease of lands in some parts there;

(c) whether the Government have taken any action to fix the responsibility of the defaulting officials;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Working of WTO

2440. SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether experts in Indian Agriculture have pointed out certain aspects of the working of WTO treaty that would adversely affect the Indian Farmers; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken to safeguard the interests of the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) Divergent views on the likely impact of the new GATT agreement in so far as it relates to Indian agriculture and the farmers have been expressed by several experts on Indian agriculture. The Government would take all measures to safeguard the interest of farmers while implementing the new agreement.

[Translation]

Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited

2441. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the I.D.P.L. factory located at Virbhadra (Rishikesh) of Uttar Pradesh has been closed as there is no production in the factory since October, 1996;

(b) the number of labourers/employees affected as a result thereof;

(c) whether the Government are taking any immediate action for the rehabilitation and livelihood of these affected labourers and employees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) to (d) The production in the IDPL factory at Virbhadra (Rishikesh) has stopped since October, 1996, mainly on account of financial constraints. However, there is no closure of the unit as such. No worker or employee of the unit has been laid-off.

[English]

TADA Cases

2442. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to release 2000 detenues arrested under TADA; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?